

108. Chinese children's books collected by Arvind Gupta

by Helen Wang, posted on Chinese Books for Young Readers, 27 Sept 2020

<https://chinesebooksforyoungreaders.wordpress.com/2020/09/27/108-chinese-childrens-books-collected-by-arvind-gupta/>

In September – which is also [#WorldKidLitMonth](#) – I came across [the library of Arvind Gupta](#) “The Toymaker” on [archive.org](#), and was intrigued to find well over 50 Chinese children's books in his collection.

Arvind Gupta (Ch: 阿尔温德·古普) is an Indian scientist, also known as “The Toymaker”. In 1978 he took a year's leave to work with the [Hoshangabad Science Teaching Programme](#), a grassroots village science teaching programme for children in the tribal district of Hoshangabad, Madhya Pradesh. While there, he developed low-cost science teaching aids using locally available materials, inspiring children to explore the world around them, learn how things work, adapt them, and enjoy learning about science and scientific principles. He has written many books, his first being *Matchstick Models and other Science Experiments* (1987). I was intrigued to find in [his collection on archive.org](#) almost 50 books in the category “Chinese children's books translated into English” and a few more listed under “Chinese”, including some Chinese children's books translated into Hindi (and some duplicates). They were all published in Beijing in the 1960s-80s by the Foreign Languages Press, Dolphin Books, Zhaohua Publishing House, and New World Press, some of them having previously been printed by other publishing houses in China. I noted some books in the “Beginning Science” series.



Beginning Science series in English and Hindi, 1980s

- [Baby Animals and their Mothers](#), by JIANG Yiming 姜一鸣 (1986)
- [Who Keeps Chattering?](#), by GENG Shouzhong 耿守忠, illus. LI Rongshan 李荣山 (1986)
- [Wonderful Pouch](#), by XIAO Bing 萧兵, illus. LU Yanguang 卢延光 and CHEN Wanxiang (1987)
- [The Great Eater in the Green Kingdom](#), by LIN Songying 林颂英, illus. JIANG Yiming 姜一鸣 (1987)
- [Photographing the Monkeys](#), by GENG Shouzhong 耿守忠, illus. LU Wei 卢卫 and ZHANG Wenzhi 张温帙 (1988) 《给猴子照相》
- [\[Echo\]](#), by MEI Ting

I wondered if Arvind Gupta might have had a particular connection with China at some point, and he kindly answered my question and gave permission to quote him here:

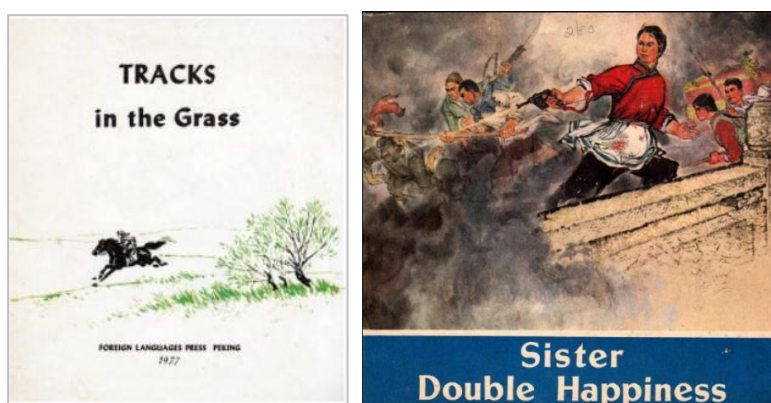
AG: *In the 1980s I wished to read to my little daughter children's books from various countries. I had collected all the Caldecott Medal books, books from England and the USA. The Russians had translated children's books in various Indian languages and they were very colorful, beautifully printed and very affordable. That is the time when several Chinese children's books were available in the Indian market, some of them in Hindi translation. I bought whatever I found for my daughter because they were very low priced. Also the Chinese children's books had a unique style of illustrations with gentle water colors. Unfortunately with the collapse of Soviet Russia the lovely Russian children's books dried up. One cannot find a single Chinese children's book in the Indian market. This makes me very sad. I have never been to China. Wish someday I could visit it.*

So, Arvind Gupta didn't have connections with China, but he did have the desire to read books from around the world to his daughter. Below are more of the Chinese children's books that he bought for her in the 1980s.

The English language books are presented here in chronological order, followed by the books in Hindi. They allow us a snapshot of the Chinese children's books that were available in translation in India at that time – the content, the design, illustration and fonts, as well as which stories, authors and illustrators were reaching international readers. These publishers published an impressive number of books translated into foreign languages – we counted 248 distinct titles in English published by the Foreign Languages Press, 1950s-1980s – see Minjie's list [“Foreign Languages Press English Juvenile”](#) on worldcat.org).

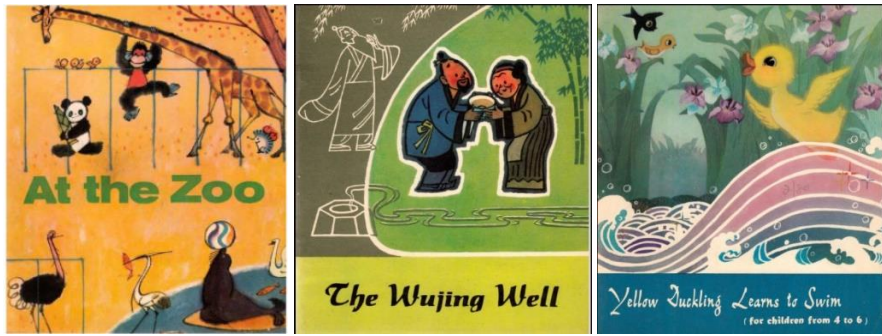
Chinese children's books translated into English (Arvind Gupta Collection)

Click on a title below to see the whole book on archive.org



Published in 1977

- [Tracks in the Grass](#), by LIN Hongru 蔺鸿儒, illus. CUI Ruzhuo 崔如琢 and GAO Baosheng 高宝生 (1977) 《追踪》
- [Sister Double Happiness](#), by Jiangsu People's Publishing House, illus. GU Zengping (1977) 《双喜嫂》



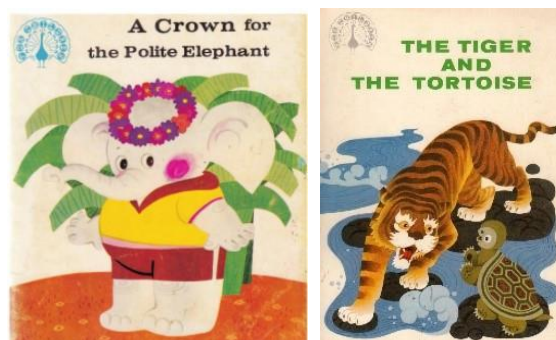
Published 1980-81

- [At the Zoo](#), by LIN Songying 林颂英, illus. ZHAN Tongxuan 詹同渲 (1980) 《动物园》
- [The Wujing Well](#), by WEN Yi 闻艺, illus. HUANG Wei 黄炜 and CHANG Guangxi 常光希 (1981) 《吴井水》
- [Yellow Duckling Learns to Swim](#), by JIN Jin 金近, illus. LEI Shisheng and LIANG Yingxi (1981) 《小黄学游泳》



Published in 1982

- [Pals in a Pencil Case](#), by ZHENG Yuanjie 郑渊洁, illus. MAO Yongkun 毛用坤 and HU Yongkai 胡永凯 (1982) 《铅笔盒里的伙伴》
- [Two Little Kittens](#), FANG Yiqun 方轶群, illus. FENG Youxuan 丰佑瑄 (1982) 《你喜欢谁?》
- [Two Lambs](#), by LI Shufen 李树芬, illus. JIANG Cheng'an 姜成安 and WU Daisheng 吴带生 (1982) 《黑羊和白羊》



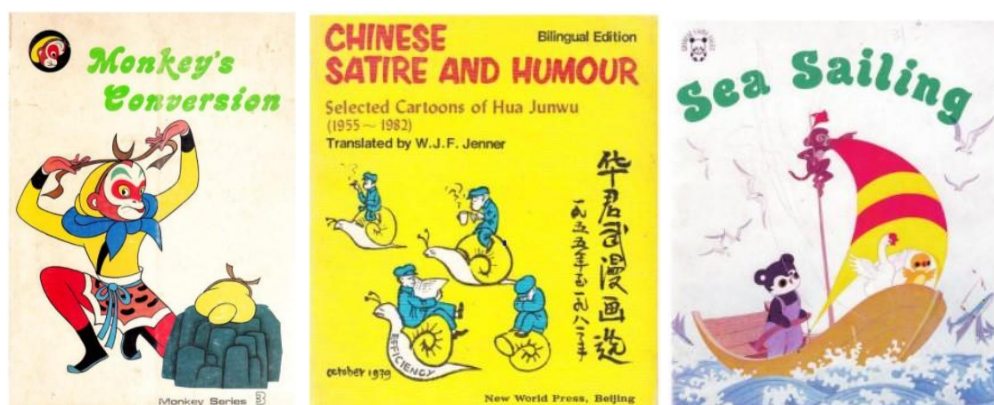
Published in 1983 or undated

- [A Crown for the Polite Elephant](#), by ZHU Jiadong 朱家栋, illus. DU Jianguo 杜建国 (1983) 《华冠送给象哥哥》
- [The Tiger and the Tortoise](#), by Wang Yanrong, illus. Jiang Cheng'an (1983)



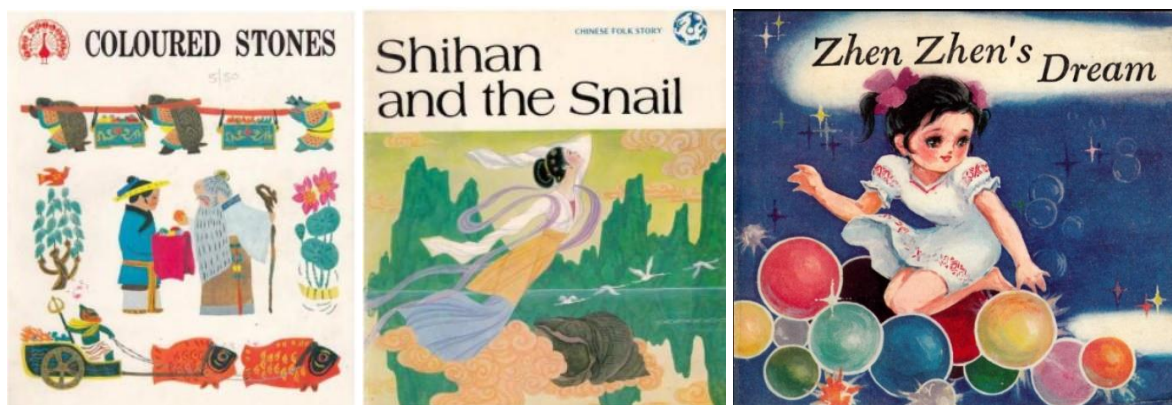
Published in 1984-85

- **Four Seasons of the Year**, by TANG Lufen 唐鲁峰 and CHEN Huilian 陈慧莲, illus. He Yanrong 何艳荣 (1984) 《一年四季》
- **Eyes and Colours**, by XU Fen 徐奋 and ZHUANG Youjuan 庄幼娟, illus. WU Jinglu 吴敬芦 (1984) 《眼睛与颜色》
- **Left and Right**, by LI Zigan 李子干, illus. JIANG Weiyu 姜渭渔 (1984) 《左右》
- **Mimi's Eyes**, by WANG Shiyi 王时一, illus. HU Yongkai 胡永凯 (1984) 《咪咪的眼睛》
- **Little White Kitten**, by MA Yue 马悦, illus. JIANG Cheng'an 姜成安 (1985) 《小白猫》
- **Two Foolish Kittens**, ed. and illus. ZHAN Tong 詹同 (1985) 《两只小猫》



Published in 1985-86

- **Monkey's Conversion**, adapted by GAO Mingyou, illus. ZENG Zhaoan and LIU Jikun (1985)
- **Chinese Satire and Humour**, by HUA Junwu 华君武, tr. W.J.F. Jenner (1986) 《华君武漫画选：1955年至1982》
- **Sea Sailing**, by WANG Tuoming, illus. JIANG Cheng'an 姜成安 (1986)



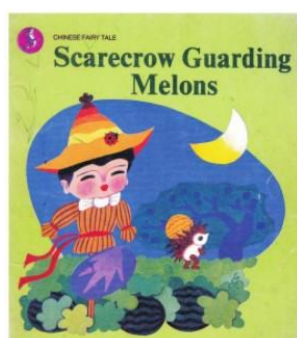
Published in 1986

- **Coloured Stones**, by WANG Yanrong 王燕荣, illus. ZHU Chengliang 朱成梁 (1986) 《五色石》
- **Shihan and the Snail**, adapted and illus. by JIANG Zhenli 蒋振立 (1986)
- **Zhen Zhen's Dream**, by and illus. MEI Ying (1986)



Published in 1987

- **Big Brother and Little Brother**, by HONG Xuntao 洪汛涛, adapted by HAI Ge, illus. PAN Xiaoqing (1987)
- **The Rabbit on the Handkerchief**, WANG Wenjuan 王文娟, adapted by YAN Xiqiang 严锡强, illus. LIN Wancui 林琬崔 (1987) 《手绢上的小白兔》
- **Le Xiaoying's Cartoons for Children**, by LE Xiaoying 乐小英 (1987)

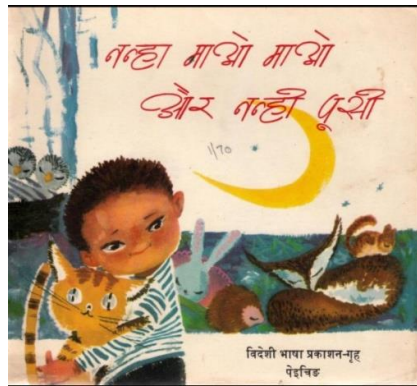
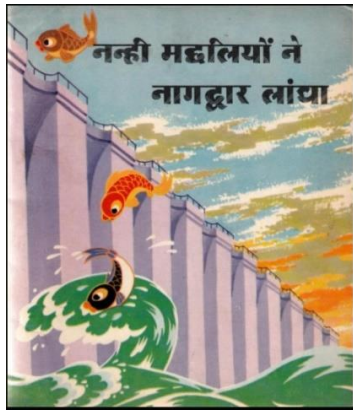


Published in 1988

- **Scarecrow Guarding Melons**, by LIN Songying 林颂英, illus. WANG Tiecheng 王铁城 (1988) 《稻草人看瓜》

Chinese children's books translated into Hindi (Arvind Gupta Collection)

Click on a title below to see the whole book on archive.org



Published 1961-82

- [\[Little Carp Jumps over Dragon Gate\]](#), by JIN Jin 金近, illus. YANG Shanzi 杨善子 and DING Ronglin 丁榕临 (1961) 《小鲤鱼跳龙门》
- [\[A Beautiful Dreamer\]](#), by GENG Geng 耿耿, illus. JIANG Cheng'an 姜成安 and WU Daisheng 吴带生 (1980) 《美丽的空想家》
- [\[The Stuck-up Kitty\]](#), adapted by GENG Geng 耿耿, illus. JIANG Cheng'an 姜成安 and WU Daisheng 吴带生 (1980) 《骄傲的小花猫》
- [\[The Old Wolf and his Guest\]](#), by MEI Ying 梅樱 (1981) 《老狼请客》
- [\[A Boy and His Kitten\]](#), by LI Guoyi 励国仪 (1982) 《毛毛和猫猫》
- [\[Happy Children\]](#), adapted by JU ZI 菊子, illus. LIN Wancui 林琬崔 (1982) 《快乐儿童》



Published in 1984 (the last two undated)

- [\[Little Chicken gets Revenge\]](#), by ZHAN Tong 詹同 (1984) 《小鸡报仇》
- [\[The Otter and the Frog\]](#), by ZHAN Tong (1984) 《水獭和蛤蟆》
- [\[The Silly Billy Goat\]](#), by ZHAN Tong (1984) 《不听话的山羊》
- [\[The Taoist Priest of Laoshan Mountain\]](#), adapted by CAO Zuerui 曹作锐, illus. DU Dakai 杜大恺 (1984) 《劳山道士》
- [\[Rag Doll Looks for a House\]](#), by LIN Songying 林颂英, illus. LI Guoyi 励国仪 (n.d.) 《布娃娃找房子》
- [\[Little Children Help\]](#) (a book of cartoons)

Many thanks to Arvind Gupta for telling us about these books in his collection!

Website: <http://www.arvindguptatoys.com/>